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**DOUGLAS ARIZONA – Ranked in Top 100 for SMALL TOWNS**

Town gets national recognition for best quality of life

DOUGLAS, AZ. — The City of Douglas, as part of the southern Arizona region, has been listed as one of the top 100 places to live in America, according to a recent study by Bizjournals.com. The Douglas area was the only region in Arizona to receive such a distinction and dispels the negative perception of southwestern border towns that has persisted in media coverage related to the US/Mexico border.

This distinction is particularly evident in the city's commitment to entrepreneurial growth. The city of Douglas is focused on small business development, as evidenced by the 57% increase in new business licenses between 2004-2005. To ensure the success and future growth of small business in Douglas, the community has initiated the Douglas Entrepreneurial Advancement Program, a business-mentoring program, which is designed to work with community agencies and business-minded individuals to bring innovative training and provide guidance to emerging businesses.

In addition to its commitment to future growth and economic development, the city boasts a cost of living that is well below that of larger metro areas such as Tucson and Phoenix, while offering many amenities and opportunities for residents and businesses alike. The city's close relationship and proximity to the Mexican border also provide numerous business opportunities.

Douglas, known as the premier southwestern border community, has continued to position itself as an extremely viable location for new business and aggressively pursuing international trade as part of its economic development focus.

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"Douglas has a tremendous opportunity to do more business with our neighbors in Mexico and the entire development corridor is well-positioned for investment by a number of regional companies," states Victor Gonzalez, Economic Development Director for the City of Douglas. "This designation certainly bears out what we have been telling potential employers about this community and highlights the components that will allow us to compete for new business."

The city has also recently implemented a program called **Home Town Competitiveness**, which provides the framework for entrepreneurship development, charitable assets, youth and leadership. Through these four pillars, the city of Douglas is able to address some of the critical issues that are prevalent in small communities, such as generational wealth transfer, youth out migration trends, loss of business and erosion of leadership capacity. Douglas is the first city in Arizona to implement the program and the city's leaders are optimistic about its success. According to Gonzalez, "we feel that this program is one part of a strategic plan that will lead to the creation of sustainable economic development in our community for years to come."

According to the survey conducted by Bizjournals, 577 of this country's "micropolitan" areas were evaluated, based on certain criteria. Micropolitan areas are defined as communities between 10,000 and 50,000 residents and offer good business opportunities and a superior quality of life. Each area of the 577 areas was rated in 12 categories, including population growth, income growth, per capita income, entrepreneurial growth, ease of commuting, small business concentration, management and professional jobs, affordable housing, low taxation, college degrees and proximity to a major metropolitan area.

For information about investment and business opportunities in Douglas, please contact Victor Gonzalez, Economic Development Director @ 520.805.4047 or the city's governmental site, go to [www.douglasaz.gov](http://www.douglasaz.gov).